

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ONY-00 /011 W
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R 132230Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 299

S E C R E T SANTIAGO 6837

STADIS//////////

FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY SCHLAUDEMANN ONLY FROM POPPER

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, ASEC, CI

SUBJECT: COMPROMISE OF CLASSIFIED INFORMATION

REF: SECSTATE 171375

1. I APPRECIATE THE ATTENTION YOU HAVE GIVEN TO THIS MATTER,
AND I AGREE WITH YOU THAT WE ARE UNLIKELY EVER TO GET TO THE
BOTTOM OF IT. AT THE SAME TIME, WHILE ONE CAN NEVER EXCLUDE

ENTIRELY THE POSSIBILITY OF A SECURITY BREACH OR PENETRATION
IN AN EMBASSY SUCH AS THIS, I CONSIDER IT MOST UNLIKELY THAT
THIS IS THE CASE IN THE PRESENT INSTANCE. LET ME TELL YOU WHY.

2. FIRST, ONE MUST LOOK AT THE QUESTION OF MOTIVATION. IF
THE GOC WERE READING OUR MAIL FOR GENERAL POLITICAL PURPOSES,
IT WOULD HAVE STRONG REASONS NOT TO TELL US SO, AND NO REASON
THAT I CAN PERCEIVE TO LAY THE RESPONSIBILITY ON OUR MILITARY
GROUP COMMANDER COLONEL GEORGE. ON THE OTHER HAND, A SCENARIO
CAN BE CONSTRUCTED UNDER WHICH SOME AMERICAN MILITARY AUTHORITY,
REGARDING GEORGE AS NOT UNRESERVEDLY COMMITTED TO THE SUPPLY
OF F-5E'S OR OTHER MILITARY EQUIPMENT TO CHILE, USES MATERIAL
IN HIS POSSESSION TO DESTROY GEORGE'S STANDING WITH THE
MILITARY LEADERS OF THE GOC. I DO NOT HAVE THE FACTUAL BASIS
TO MAKE ANY CHARGE TO THIS EFFECT, BUT AT LEAST A CLEAR
PATTERN OF MOTIVATION COULD EXIST IN THIS CONTINGENCY. IT

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IS EVEN POSSIBLE TO CONCEIVE OF SOME U.S. MILITARY SOURCE

USING THE LEAKED MATERIAL TO SHOW HOW REMISS THOSE "STATE DEPARTMENT TYPES" ARE IN ADVANCING CHILE'S INTEREST.

3. SECOND, THE TIMING SUGGESTS THAT THE DOCUMENT WAS ACTUALLY MADE AVAILABLE TO GENERAL LEIGH IN WASHINGTON. COLONEL GEORGE AND COLONEL RUIZ, CHILEAN AIR FORCE G-2, WERE IN WASHINGTON AT ABOUT THE SAME TIME. GENERAL LEIGH VISITED WASHINGTON SHORTLY AFTERWARD AND SUBSEQUENTLY, REQUESTED COLONEL GEORGE'S REMOVAL.

4. THIRD, THERE WAS AN ACCIDENTAL ELEMENT IN THE SITUATION. HAD I NOT GONE TO GENERAL LEIGH IN AN EFFORT TO DO WHAT I COULD ON BEHALF OF COLONEL GEORGE, WE WOULD PROBABLY HAVE NEVER KNOWN THAT THE GOC POSSESSED THIS PARTICULAR DOCUMENT. AS STATED ABOVE, IF THERE WERE A FULL PENETRATION OF OUR EMBASSY, IT WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN COMPROMISED BY READING TO ME FROM A TEXT. FURTHERMORE, A SYSTEMATIC PENETRATION WOULD PROBABLY HAVE TURNED UP NOT AN INTERMEDIATE DRAFT, BUT OUR FINAL DOCUMENT.

5. FOR THESE REASONS I REMAIN OF THE OPINION THAT THE SECURITY LEAK VERY PROBABLY OCCURRED IN WASHINGTON. IN THIS RESPECT IT DIFFERS FROM THE 1974 EPISODE, WHERE SOME OF US HAD THE STRONG IMPRESSION THAT THE LEAK ORIGINATED WITHIN THIS EMBASSY. AT THAT TIME WE TRIED TO GET A SECURITY INVESTIGATION HERE IN SANTIAGO. MY IMPRESSION IS THAT WE GOT A DUSTY ANSWER.

6. IN ORDER TO AVOID IF AT ALL POSSIBLE THE SPECULATION AND THE DAMAGE TO MORALE WHICH WOULD ACCOMPANY A FULL-FLEDGED SECURITY INVESTIGATION IN THE EMBASSY, I WOULD PREFER TO WAIT UNTIL WE GET THE RESULTS OF THE WASHINGTON INVESTIGATION BEFORE DECIDING TO PROCEED FURTHER HERE. MEANWHILE LET ME REPEAT THAT I AM GRATEFUL FOR YOUR EFFORTS AND YOUR THOUGHTS. WE MAY BE COMING BACK TO YOU AGAIN.
POPPER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CLASSIFIED INFORMATION, SECURITY LEAKS, SECURITY INVESTIGATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 13 JUL 1976
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976SANTIA06837
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760270-0413
From: SANTIAGO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760764/aaaacdzt.tel
Line Count: 97
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: STADIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: STADIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 14 JUL 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <14 JUL 2004 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <27 OCT 2004 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: COMPROMISE OF CLASSIFIED INFORMATION
TAGS: PFOR, ASEC, CI, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006